

Northfield Open Space Committee

DRAFT

Minutes

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March 17, 2015

Town Hall – Planning Board Room

Present: Julia Blyth, Bob Hall, Sue Ross, Jerry Wagener, Chair.

Absent: Mike Barry, Joanne McGee, Lesley Powers, Kate Rossiter, Jenny Tufts

The meeting opened at 7:30.

1. **Adoption of agenda:** Draft OK
2. **Approval of minutes:** Deferred.
3. **TPL option on NMH land:** Chris Lapointe from TPL said they'd lined up over \$2 million, but it needs to be used by the end of the fiscal year, June 30. There are two impediments to closing. One is that NMH's surveys are delayed, more from who they hired than the great complexity. The surveys are less than half done and Chris doesn't think the title can be ready that soon. The other issue is the water company. TPL did talk to NMH about separating the water company from the land, and after some consideration they refused. TPL has extended the contract for 3 months, and will negotiate again to extend it another year. Rolling into the next fiscal year means figuring out how to preserve the \$2 million. DCR will probably still want the property. Chris has a meeting with EEA next week to talk about the Landscape Partnership Grant. The water company has a buyer that might make an offer in the next week or two. Even if the buyer is real, they probably couldn't close by June because of the title mess, but would give TPL more power to negotiate for more time. Also, there is a DPU process for the water company, which would take 4-6 months. To further clarify the water company: right now the water company doesn't own land; they just hold a lease and own the liabilities (dam, trucks, pipes, etc). DCR doesn't want to own someone else's watershed, and would prefer that the water company own that land, and DCR just holds a conservation restriction on it.

Chris also reported that he's leaving TPL for a new job, but that several people know this project: Loren Butler (attorney), Darcy Scoffield (project manager), and Kevin Essington.
4. **2015 Open Space Conference:** Maggie Owens from Americorps/Mount Grace outlined the conference. May 9, in Ashburnham. It is free, and information is presented by OSC members and municipal board member, including Mike Barry.
5. **Ames CR update:** Matthias Nevins (Mount Grace) submitted a grant proposal to the Recreational Trails Program. The selectboard wrote a letter to RTP supporting the trail. Joe Graveline wrote a letter about the history of the area.
6. **TGP pipeline update:** Julia Blyth mentioned the two warrant articles about the pipeline on for Town Meeting (May 4) and a question on the ballot (May 5).
7. **2014 Citizen Stewardship Award:** The award is going to the boy scouts. The selectboard will present it at Town Meeting.

8. **Community Park update**: Jerry Wagener will try to come to the next meeting to discuss the implications of the NMH land, and if he should go ahead with negotiations (CPC essentially allowed \$35,000 for park land by approving \$110,000 for the NMH land with the park parcel, and \$75,000 for the land without that parcel).
9. **Member comments**: Sue Ross said that there is a Scenic Byway meeting March 18. Jerry Wagener said that he'd replied to the letter that Susan Secco wrote about the pipeline.
10. **Adjournment**: The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Julia Blyth